



Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community ZONING ORDINANCE AND DESIGN GUIDELINES UPDATE

Frequently Asked Questions and Definitions

What is ZODU?

The Zoning Ordinance and Design Update (ZODU) project is the comprehensive update to the Community's Zoning Ordinance and Design Standards. This update is being done in-house by the Community Development Department's Planning Services Division with extensive input from the Community members and other stakeholders. The first phase of the project deals with the Mixed Use Commercial and other commercial corridor areas (e.g., Pima Road, McKellips Road, McDowell Road) and is expected to be completed in March 2011.

What is the General Plan?

The General Plan documents the Community's vision of what the Community should be like in the future and is used as a guide for Community decisions related to development. It identifies locations where residential, commercial, warehousing, industrial and other types of development should occur, and areas that should not be developed and preserved. It also addresses what infrastructure will be needed to serve the Community as it grows, such as streets, water, sewerage, drainage, and open space. The General Plan Map guides the decisions about where the different zoning districts would be appropriate. The current General Plan is called "General Plan Sustainable SRP-MIC...Planning for Generations" and includes sustainability as its core principle. This General Plan was adopted by Community Council in 2006 and is available through the Community Development Department, Planning Services Division office.

What is Sustainable Development?

Sustainable development is a development that fulfills the need of the present generation without compromising the needs of the future generations. It strives to create improvements that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. In urban and rural planning, sustainable development endeavors for compact, walkable, shaded and transit-served development integrated with energy and resource efficient buildings and infrastructure. For example, it encourages buildings that are certified with LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) designation, promotes the provision of native landscaping materials, and climate-friendly design and generally integration of nature into the human environment.

What is the Zoning Ordinance?

The Zoning Ordinance is a set of regulations used to implement the General Plan. It regulates where different types of land uses can be located, how large they can be and how they should be designed. The current Zoning Ordinance of SRPMIC was adopted in 1981. The Zoning Ordinance text describes in detail what land uses can be developed in each Zoning District. The Zoning Ordinance includes text describing allowed uses and development standards in different districts and various conditions required

to be met for such uses. It also includes a Zoning District map showing where the different zoning districts are currently established.

Why is the current Zoning Ordinance being changed?

The current Code is old and not very clear or concise. It is also difficult to use because it's not very user-friendly. The submittal, review and approval process it requires is often confusing and take too long to complete. The list of allowed land uses is incomplete and includes some obsolete uses and many uses require a "Conditional Use Permit". Some contemporary uses are not included in the zoning districts. The Development Standards associated with each zoning district are mostly suburban, not very comprehensive and they don't always ensure high quality results. Finally, the new Code will utilize graphics to explain definitions and communicate design concepts, making the document more use friendly.

What are Development and Design Standards?

The Community's Development and Design Standards were prepared in 1992 and provide detailed requirements for the desired character of buildings, roadways, landscape, site layout, hardscape (e.g., paving, walkways, and turn around), site furnishings, walls, lighting, and signage. They are used to direct a designer on how to express the desired aesthetic and functional character in a building and site planning. The SRPMIC design standards also include concepts related to the cultures of the Pima and Maricopa communities. Through the ZODU project, these standards also will be updated, and likely modified to operate as design guidelines (see below).

What are Design Guidelines?

Design Guidelines include information on the Community's desire to ensure high quality and culturally responsive development. Design Guidelines address architecture, landscaping, lighting and signage as well as the colors and materials used for construction. Guidelines provide guidance to developers and landowners, on what is expected, but usually are not included in the actual zoning ordinance. The application of guidelines is typically more flexible than the application of the zoning ordinance or design standard.

What are Character Areas?

Urban and suburban areas may be divided into some character districts to encourage unique patterns of development in each character area. Character areas are primarily designed to reinforce the historical and existing character of the location and may also include the Community's new vision for that area. The character area gets their distinct characters by means of a combination of preferred land uses and localized aesthetic qualities. Character areas are often achieved by creating special overlays on selected geographical boundaries and modifying the land uses allowed by the underlying zoning districts, and requiring modified development and design standards in those areas.

What is Euclidean Zoning?

Euclidean zoning is named for the Village of Euclid, Ohio where zoning was first adopted as a means of governmental police power. Euclid's zoning ordinance was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co. (1926), and it began a legal precedent on regulating the use of land in the United States. Euclidean zoning codes are characterized by establishing and regulating use on lands. Typical types of land-use districts in Euclidean zoning are: residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial. The current Zoning Ordinance of the Community follows the Euclidean model.

What is Form Based Zoning?

Form-Based Zoning Codes are more recent development methods of regulating development to achieve a specific urban form. Form-based codes place an emphasis on the relationship between the street and buildings, pedestrian and vehicular uses, public and private spaces, and the relationship between multiple buildings, a block, a neighborhood and the entire city. They create a more predictable public physical realm by controlling physical forms of the developments, with a secondary focus on land use regulations. Many municipalities are adopting some elements of form based codes for certain areas or the whole municipality.

What are Floating Zoning Districts?

Floating zoning districts are the districts written into the zoning ordinance, which may not necessarily be put in the Zoning District Maps at the time when the Zoning Ordinance is promulgated. They are districts which would allow new combinations of uses and require that the prescribed development standards be met. The new districts include appropriate development standards commensurate with uses and the development intensity permitted in that district. The floating zoning districts are available for landowners and developers who wish to rezone their lands to these new districts. Some new districts may have geographical limitations of applicability so that they are available for rezoning only on certain area of a community. Floating districts provide additional zoning options for future development. Floating districts may be included with the update to the zoning ordinance.

What is Floor Area Ratio (FAR)?

Floor Area Ratio or FAR is the ratio of the total amount of building floor space contained on all of the floors of all of the buildings to the total area of the site where it is built. For example, 1,500 square feet of total floor area is built (one on or more floors) on a site that is 10,000 square feet, the FAR would be $1,500/10,000 = 0.15$. FAR controls the intensity of development on a site.

What is Mixed-Use Commercial?

A “Mixed-Use Commercial Area” is a land use designation in the General Plan used to describe an area where office, retail, restaurants, medical offices, hotels, casinos, warehousing and light industrial type buildings should be allowed. In the Zoning Ordinance a “Mixed use Commercial Zone” would establish the location, size, and design standards for a mix of these uses. These standards would help to ensure that these uses would be developed in an attractive and compatible manner.

What are Light Industrial Uses?

Light Industrial uses include activities that are not offensive to nearby commercial and residential uses. These uses generally permit assembly and warehousing that do not create excessive noise, vibrations, and smoke, dust and waste streams. Light industrial areas that may be permitted in urban areas will include strict performance requirements to limit noise, dust, and smoke emissions. Further, strong aesthetics and landscaping standards are imposed to make those uses more compatible with the general surroundings.

What are Heavy Industrial Uses?

Heavy industrial uses may include manufacturing and production activities including chemical transformation of materials that generate significant noise, dust, vibrations and waste streams including hazardous wastes. Heavy industrial processes may involve significant amounts of heat, mechanical and chemical processing, and large amounts of materials transfer, extended or multiple shift operation, and large structures. Heavy industrial uses are usually not permitted in urban and most suburban areas. When permitted, strong performance standards and aesthetics and landscaping standards are imposed to make those uses more compatible with the general surroundings.

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